

SPEECH

OF

HON. JESSE C. DICKEY, OF PENNSYLVANIA,

IN THE

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

IN REFERENCE TO

THE ADMISSION OF CALIFORNIA AND THE SUBJECT OF SLAVERY.

Made in Committee of the Whole, June 6, 1850.

Mr. DICKEY said :

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I have not made an effort to obtain the floor for the purpose of a display of oratory on this all-important subject, which may truly be said to be, not only the question of the session, but the question of the day. Nor do I presume that it will be possible for one of my limited experience in legislation to throw any new light upon a question which has been so ably and learnedly discussed on this floor, by older and abler men, or even to present old ideas in such a manner as to command the attention of the Committee. I have sought the floor for no such purposes; but to define my position, and designate the course which I shall pursue in reference to a subject which has been the occasion of so much interest—intense excitement, I may say—and the chief topic of debate for the last five months in both branches of Congress. I need scarcely say, sir, that the subject to which I refer is the admission of California into this Confederacy, with a provision in her Constitution prohibiting slavery or involuntary servitude.

The application of California for admission into the Union as a State has occasioned a strong desire and apparent determination, on the part of the Representatives of the South, to have settled, at the same time, and definitely and forever, some six other questions involving the institution of slavery more or less in their discussion, and each of sufficient importance for separate and distinct bills, and distinct action. Sir, I conceive it to be a duty, which I owe to the intelligent as well as numerous constituents whom I have the honor to represent, that I should speak plainly and boldly on a subject in which they feel such a deep and abiding interest. My constituents are emphatically a reading, thinking, and intellectual people. Many of them are the descendants of the companions and associates of the illustrious man who planted the first colony in Pennsylvania as long ago as 1682, and from whom the glorious "Keystone of the Federal arch" took its name. The opposition of the early settlers in Pennsylvania to the institution of slavery and its further extension, has long been proverbial. Mild and truth-

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ful, yet firm and unwavering on this subject, few, if any, within the limits of my district, have ever expressed a willingness that slavery should extend to another foot of American soil; and with them, on this subject, I most heartily concur.

Mr. Chairman, my native State, at one time, groaned under the weight of this great political and moral evil; but, thank God, the incubus has long since been removed from our shoulders, and we now breathe the breath of freedom! From the fact that we have had slavery at one time in our midst, and now have freedom, we are the better able to judge of the curse of the one and to appreciate the blessings of the other. We consider slavery incompatible with true patriotism, justice, or humanity; and its extension to hitherto free soil, and to a free people, a blight, a blast, a mildew, a scourge, and a curse, which we would disdain to receive from any of the other powers of the earth, and which we would pour out our treasure and exert our strength to avert from our land and from our children! Why, then, attempt to force it upon a people now free from its miseries? It would be a violation of that golden rule, by which I have always desired to be governed in my intercourse with my fellow men—that is, to do unto others as I would have them do unto me; and, consequently, I can never so far forget that rule as to give my vote for the further extension and propagation of slavery.

Sir, that great and eminently distinguished statesman, whose statue stands in front of the Executive Mansion, with the Constitution in hand, has left on record an opinion on the subject of slavery, which well deserves to be kept in perpetual remembrance by every true-hearted American. He, in speaking on this subject, said: "I tremble for my country when I remember that God is just." He also said, as you will remember: "So true as there is a God in heaven, so true will this nation be punished for the sin of slavery!" And that there is, Mr. Chairman, a God, to punish and reward, is beautifully illustrated by the quotation from the poet Thompson, made a few weeks since by my friend and colleague, [Mr. CHANDLER] which tells us that Nature proclaims

the fact through all her works. The same poet also says that "God must delight in virtue, and that which God delights in must be happy." Now, it must be apparent to all, that the great and good men of Virginia could not have looked upon the institution of slavery as a virtue, or as productive of good; else why use such terms in their writings as I have quoted from Jefferson? Mr. Jefferson was a Southern man, in heart and soul, born and reared in its sunny clime, in the midst of slavery, and no one was better qualified than he, to appreciate the moral, political, and religious effects of the institution, on a community where it existed. He was a statesman of learning and ability, and not only well versed in the arts and sciences, but, as a statesman, politician, and jurist, he had few equals; and it is due to his memory, that his opinions and writings, on questions of the greatest national interests, living when and where he did, should be well pondered by the present generation. His efforts to effect the abolition of slavery commenced as early as 1769. As a member of the Legislature of Virginia, he was appointed one of a committee to revise the then colonial laws of his native State. Before that committee, he urged and warmly recommended the gradual abolition of slavery in the colony.

Mr. Chairman, having thus spoken of slavery as suggested by the question of the admission of California into the Union as a free State, I will now proceed to give a few reasons why she should be admitted with the Constitution which her people have so unanimously adopted, and with her prescribed boundaries, and her population as it is.

The Mexican Province of California, named as such in the treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, is situated upon the Pacific ocean, between 32° and 42° north latitude, and 30° and 47° west longitude from Washington. It contains some 700 miles of sea coast, and an area of some 145,000 square miles, bounded on the north by the Oregon Territory, east by the Sierra Nevada, or great Snowy Mountains, and west by the Pacific. Though the sea coast is so extensive, yet her harbors are but few, the principal one being the bay of San Francisco. This bay is located near the centre of the sea coast, and is said to be one of the most capacious and safe harbors in the world, affording moorage for at least five hundred vessels. This, Mr. Chairman, is all I desire to say at present in regard to its geography.

Of the many reasons which may be urged in favor of her speedy admission into the Union, an important one is, the great distance she is from the frontier settlements and the seat of the National Government—it being from the western settlements, by the Rocky Mountain route, 1,100 miles, and, by the way of the Isthmus of Panama, some forty-five days' journey from New York. When, sir, we consider this great distance from the capital of the country, in connection with the varied character of her population, being a representation of almost every nation on the face of the earth, one would readily suppose that her interests, as well as the interests of our Government, would demand her immediate admission as a State. If we look to former precedents in the

admission of States, we have no excuse for this delay. The population of California, at present, consists probably of at least 140,000. This population, owing to the peculiar and very extraordinary circumstances which have brought them suddenly into such close proximity, have made them call loudly, and with earnestness, upon us to admit them into the Union, and thus to afford them that protection and those rights which our respective States possess, in order that they may form a Government under the Constitution which they have sent here for our inspection, and which may be said to be entirely unexceptionable, except to a few bigoted slavery-propagandists.

It is more than probable, Mr. Chairman, that there is not an instance on record where a colony has increased so rapidly in numbers, in the same length of time, as in the case of California, and the question naturally arises, what has been the cause of this immense increase in such a short period of time? This question is answered by the fact, that the mineral wealth of the country has attracted men of every clime to this Golconda. Thousands upon thousands have gone, and are daily going there, in search of the gold with which the country abounds; and we are all well aware that, among these vast number of adventurers, there are many bold and bad men. Now, past history warns us, in many a page, that this gold-hunting has rather a tendency to corrupt than to improve the morals of a community. Hence the necessity of having the strong arm of a civil Government to protect them, rather than that of an obnoxious military rule. The selfishness of mankind has ever made it necessary for the people to create Governments for their protection against its baneful influence. Government is the soul of society; and, where a people have been attracted together by the cohesiveness of the "root of all evil," there must be, evidently, a greater necessity for the inestimable blessings of a Government, than under any other circumstances imaginable.

From what I have learned, sir, and have the best reason to believe true, a more bold and patriotic people than our brethren in California have never sought a home in a wild and trackless wilderness. But another reason for her speedy admission is, the evident deficiencies in her land titles. It is supposed by many persons, that the Jesuits, who were the first missionaries, and the Franciscans, their successors, hold titles from the Spanish Crown to the lands which the settlers occupy. By delay in the investigation of these titles, they may become exceedingly difficult and troublesome for adjudication. These are subjects for judicial examination; and hence arises the great necessity of California being placed in a position where she could have legally organized courts to settle these perplexing questions which are already arising among her people.

Why, sir, the amount of revenue which this Government has derived from California, for the first year, is some \$600,000; and the amount which it is supposed will be received the ensuing year will probably reach \$2,000,000. This in itself is an argument for her admission, as powerful as the gold itself. The Hon. T. B. King, in

his late able report, has furnished us with an estimate of the value of trade between California and the States of the Union. He says, (and no one is better able to form a correct estimate,) that it will amount to not less than \$25,000,000. Here is an opening into one of the most important markets of the world, for the introduction of our surplus produce, and one which ought most assuredly to receive the immediate attention of Congress. It is a market where the mere products of our gardens command such prices as would almost enrich us. Take some examples of the prices of articles, as now selling in California. Potatoes bring sixteen dollars per bushel, and turnips from twenty-five cents to sixty-two cents each, while coal commands from sixty dollars to one hundred dollars per ton, and lumber from seventy-five dollars to one hundred dollars per thousand, and almost all other articles in proportion. Such a state of things well merits the attention and fostering care of the Government.

There is another consideration, Mr. Chairman, which should weigh in favor of the admission of California. There has been a calculation made, by those who have been there, that some 15,000 foreigners, who came in armed bands, have carried away, already, more than twenty millions worth of gold dust. I would inquire, why we should so long delay her admission, at the loss of such vast treasures, while our Government is so deeply involved in debt? As well might we suffer the agricultural products of the rich and teeming valleys of Pennsylvania to be carried off without recompense, as to allow the productions of the rich mines of California to be thus spirited away—productions which have caused this nation so vast an expenditure of blood and treasure. The character of those brave men who are knocking at our doors with the California Constitution in their hands, entitles their case to a speedy consideration. One of them (Colonel FREMONT) is a bold and chivalric pioneer, who, in the spirit of Columbus, made his trackless way across the snow-bounded wilderness; and he is now awaiting the action of Congress, at this most momentous issue, in order to present the wishes and wants of our brethren in his far-distant home. He has high claims upon his country, and his friends are no doubt anxiously anticipating his taking his seat in the other House, as one of their Senators. I trust that he will not be detained much longer from the seat to which he is so justly entitled.

Having thus, Mr. Chairman, stated some of the considerations which favor the admission of California, I will briefly notice some of the objections which have been raised against her admission. Some persons have pretended to argue, as an objection, that the people of California were not authorized by an act of Congress to form a State Constitution. True, Congress has not passed such an act, yet it must be remembered that Congress *may* admit States without such an authorization; and we have the precedents of eight States which have been brought into the Union without the preface of any such law. They stand as follows:

Vermont in 1791, Kentucky in 1792, Tennessee in 1796, Maine in 1820, Arkansas in 1836, Michigan in 1837, Florida in 1845, and Iowa in 1846.

This objection, Mr. Chairman, is, we see, entirely destroyed by the legislation of our predecessors, and the influence of precedents.

Others have argued, as an objection, that aliens assisted in the formation of the Constitution of California, and were allowed to vote for it. But, sir, this has occurred in the formation of every State Constitution since the Confederacy was created. In the case of Texas, all who voted were foreigners, in their relations to the United States; yet, in 1845, she was brought into the Union. This objection is, therefore, entirely removed. It is also objected that her population is entirely insufficient to entitle her to two members of Congress. But, Mr. Chairman, it must be remembered that the inhabitants of California are the heads and representatives of families, which, if they were with their fathers and husbands in that distant land, would swell the population to-day to more than 500,000 souls. Sir, I feel perfectly willing to leave it to the honest and candid mind, whether there is any weight or force in these objections, and pass on to another.

It is said further, Mr. Chairman, in objection to the admission of California, that her boundaries are too great. True, there is within her limits an extent of territory covering some 145,000 square miles; yet, when the western slope of the Sierra Nevada, and the various desert spots with which she is covered, are abstracted, there is not as much arable land left as there is in the State of New York or Ohio. California presents a long narrow strip of about 150 miles in width, her natural and principal boundaries being, as I before mentioned, the Sierra Nevada and the Pacific Ocean; and, as the experienced Senator from Missouri [Mr. BENTON] has beautifully said, her heart is the Bay of San Francisco, and her arteries, the rivers Sacramento and San Joaquin, and their tributaries. No naturalist, or statesman, could make a division of California, without a violation of natural boundaries. But why discuss so plain a case? Congress has fully removed this objection in size, in the admission of Texas, with her immense prairies and her rich soil, stretching 325,000 square miles—nearly three times as large as California!

Mr. Chairman, in conclusion of what I have to say with reference to California, I would remark, that the various arguments and considerations which have been urged in behalf of her admission into the Union have been most formidable and conclusive—more so than any that have ever been advanced in favor of the admission of any other State; and the objections which have been urged against her, the most futile that statesmen ever seriously advanced. This is my deliberate opinion.

Mr. Chairman, we have heard much, since the meeting of Congress in December last, about the North having aggressed upon the South. But, sir, how does the case really stand, when we come to examine fully and fairly? What do we learn from an examination of historical facts connected with the past and present history of our Government? When the Union was first organized, it consisted of thirteen States, seven of which were free, or prospectively free States, and six were

slave States. At present, the Union consists of thirty States—fifteen of which are free, and fifteen slave States. Thus, there has been one more slave State added to the Union than the fair share of the South, since the Union was formed, taking her own claim to equal division as well founded. This a schoolboy ten years old would scarcely consider an aggression on the part of the North! Again: it is universally conceded among honest and business men, that when a business association is formed, each member of the association contributing an equal share of capital, and each devoting an equal portion of his time to advance the interest of the association, and having no other source of revenue, that those members of the firm who, by some rule of hocus pocus or legerdemain, have been able to secure to themselves a much larger share of the profits and proceeds than their partners, have violated the articles of the partnership! This I consider a fair illustration of the conduct of the Southern part of the Government. Although the slave States numbered one less in the beginning of the Government, we see how stands the case in regard to territory, and which portion has the larger amount. The following table will show the extent of territory of each, in square miles:

Extent of States in Square Miles.

Maine - - -	35,000	Delaware - - -	2,120
Vermont - - -	8,000	Maryland - - -	11,000
N. Hampshire -	8,030	Virginia - - -	61,352
Massachusetts -	7,250	North Carolina	45,500
Rhode Island -	1,250	South Carolina	28,000
Connecticut - -	4,750	Georgia - - -	58,000
New York - - -	46,000	Kentucky - - -	37,680
New Jersey - -	6,850	Tennessee - -	44,000
Pennsylvania -	47,000	Louisiana - -	46,431
Ohio - - - - -	39,964	Mississippi - -	47,147
Indiana - - - -	33,809	Alabama - - -	50,722
Illinois - - - -	55,405	Missouri - - -	67,380
Michigan - - - -	56,234	Arkansas - - -	52,198
Iowa - - - - -	50,914	Florida - - -	59,268
Wisconsin - - -	53,924		
		Total slave	610,798
Total free - - -	454,340	Texas - - - -	325,520
California - - -	145,000		
			936,318
	599,340	District of Col.	50
			936 368
Free States - - -	- - - - -		599,340
Balance in favor of slavery -	- - - - -		337,028

Now, Mr. Chairman, from these statistics we have the fact that, even after California shall have been admitted into the Union, the slave States will have nearly 350,000 square miles of territory more than the free States—a sufficiency to form seven States as large as the State of New York! If this is not an instance of the very reverse of what is charged—expansion of the South at the expense of the North, and of Southern aggression—I know not what aggression means!

But, perhaps, one of the most striking instances of inequality (and I leave it to be determined whether it is in favor of the North or South) is the manner in which the Supreme Court of the

United States has been organized. That Court consists of nine circuits. Four of these are within the limits of the free States, and five within the slave States. The following table will show, at a glance, the different circuits, the locations, and the aggregate free population of each:

FREE STATES.

Circuit.	States composing it.	Free population.
First	Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, and Rhode Island - - -	1,632,896
Second	Vermont, Connecticut, and New York	3,030,847
Third	New Jersey and Pennsylvania - - -	2,097,339
Seventh	Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, and Michigan	2,893,783

SLAVE STATES.

Circuit.	States composing it.	Free population.
Fourth	Delaware, Maryland, and Virginia -	1,246,572
Fifth	Alabama and Louisiana - - - -	521,283
Sixth	North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia - - - - -	1,187,410
Eighth	Kentucky, Tennessee, and Missouri -	1,569,163
Ninth	Mississippi and Arkansas - - - -	258,079

From the above table, Mr. Chairman, we arrive at the fact, that though the slave States embrace something less than half the aggregate free population, they have the circuits so arranged that they have five out of the nine Judges! This is such a very plain case that I would suppose that even my honorable colleague [Mr. Ross] would join with me in concluding that the South has controlled this matter with much adroitness, and at least secured their rights in the organization of this Court, and that *this* is, at any rate, not an instance of aggression on the part of the North! Sir, it must be painful to the ear and sickening to the soul of every true friend of liberty, to see Northern men crouch and cringe so low at the foot of the Slave Power, as to proclaim, on this floor, that the South has never aggressed upon the North! I do not mean to be personal, but it is time the proper rebuke should be given.

Again, Mr. Chairman, if any one should make the inquiry in whose hand has resided the practical control of this Government for the past sixty years, he need but look at the facts. At the close of the present Presidential term, the South will have held the Presidency fifty-two years, while the North have only had it for twelve years. Of the Secretaries of State for the same period, fourteen have come from the slave States, while but five of them were from the North. Thirteen Judges of the Supreme Court have been appointed from the South, and but twelve from the North. As I before stated, the slave States have always had a majority of the Judges of the Supreme Court, and the Chief Justice continually during the nineteenth century. But, to render the charge still more clear, that the South have managed to control the National Government, I will give, for the benefit of my colleague, an extract from a leading Southern paper, written during the Presidential campaign of 1844. I quote the *Charleston Courier* of October 30 in that year:

"Our past experience has shown that the

weight of the South has been heavily felt in the political balance, and has almost always monopolized high federal office.

"The Southern or slaveholding States have given six out of ten Presidents to the Union. The Northern or non-slaveholding States have given but four; and, out of these four, the two last were chosen by a large majority of Southern votes, and the last was a native Virginian, filially devoted to the rights and interests of the land of his birth; and even the two first enlisted a strong Southern support.

"Again—of the six Southern Presidents, five were reëlected to their high offices, and each occupied it for eight years, and only one will have occupied it but four years, giving in all to the slaveholding interest the possession and control of the Presidency for forty-four years out of fifty-six, while of the four non-slaveholding Presidents, three occupied the Presidency but four years each, and one only a little month, giving in all to the non-slaveholding interest the possession and control of the Presidency for only twelve years out of fifty-six.

"So of the Chief Justices of the Union. The South has had three, and the North but two, out of the five incumbents of that august judicial seat."

Another item of Southern admission, which goes to prove that the South has controlled the Government, is the very frank confession which, a short time since, was made by the honorable member from Virginia, [Mr. MEADE,] who boastingly said in his speech, "*Though the South have been in a numerical minority for the last fifty years, we have managed to control the Government!*" Could my colleague require more to arouse his sense of justice and his jealous pride as a Pennsylvanian?

But, sir, I believe one of the most cruel and selfish demands ever made by the institution of slavery and its propagandists, was the removal of some of the peaceful tribes of the aborigines of the soil, with whom the Government was in treaty, while, on various occasions, making appropriations for their improvement in agricultural and the mechanic arts. In some instances, these simple Children of the Forest had made many improvements in their manner of living. They were increasing in civilization, and enjoying comfort and happiness. But the mandate went forth from the Slave Power, and their behests were to be obeyed! The North, as usual, hastened to the assistance of their oppressors, and these poor Indians were driven from their homes, and all they held most dear, beyond the Father of Waters, and slavery was extended over the soil that covered the bones of their fathers!

Again, we see, by the acts of Congress of 1836, that slavery demanded a slip of free territory north of 36° 30', to be added to the slave State of Missouri, and that, too, in direct violation of the Compromise of 1820. The North, like spaniels, came into the arrangement, and the object of the South was accomplished. Thus six of the most beautiful counties in the Platte country (hitherto free territory) were added to a slave State! This, Mr. Chairman, is another instance of Despotism's victory over Freedom, whereby

the black flag of Slavery was made to wave over lands which national law had declared should ever be free!

The purchases of Louisiana in 1803, and Florida in 1819, and the annexation of Texas in 1845, (all darling objects of the South,) are so many instances of the aggressions of the Slave Power, which has managed to extend the curses, and crimes, and cruelties of slavery, by its last consummated plot, more than 500,000 square miles!

Sir, when we remember that the Anti-Slavery feeling found a home in the South, and a warm and devoted friend in the Sage of Monticello, so early as the year 1769; and when we further remember, that in the same sunny South, there was a general and prevailing opinion, at that early day, that it should not only go no further, but that the Southern people themselves were even considering the propriety and expediency of its abolition, as well as that of the slave trade, it cannot be a subject of surprise, that, in the year 1787, Congress did, without a single dissenting State, pass an Ordinance prohibiting the extension of slavery into the Northwestern Territory—from which Territory has since sprung the five great States of Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, and Wisconsin. Methinks, sir, that no one can reflect, for a moment, on the millions of freemen who now inhabit those States, with their present wealth, prosperity, moral advancement, and prospective greatness, without feeling gratitude in his soul to Almighty God, that our wise forefathers prohibited the withering curse of slavery from touching that gloriously prosperous region!

Again, Mr. Chairman, it should be remembered, that, when that memorable Congress was in session at New York, the Convention which framed the present Constitution of the United States was also in session in Philadelphia; and that, under the prevailing public sentiment of that day, which was that slavery should extend no further, the Convention presented this Constitution, which was finally accepted by all the States of the Union.

This fact has made it clear, to my mind, that the framers of that Constitution, from every portion of the country, did not anticipate that slavery would ever be further extended under it. No, sir, no! And I am further convinced, that the letter and spirit of the Declaration of Independence, as well as of the Constitution, is directly opposed to the further extension of slavery. Consequently, as an honest, and, I trust, a conscientious man, I shall always feel it my duty to exert all the powers of mind and influence which God has given me, to prevent the further extension of that foul leprosy, which the great Jefferson himself called such a vast "moral and political evil."

Sir, another and a strong reason why I am opposed to the extension of slavery is, that we have convincing proof, that, in those States where slavery does not exist, the people are much more prosperous, in a civil, moral, and political point of view, than they are in the slave States. Besides, every man of ordinary observation must know, and, knowing, should bear in mind, this fact, that those portions of slave States which lie

contiguous to or border upon free States, though they receive nothing but the *shadow* of Freedom, for example, as it is thrown across Mason and Dixon's line, or the Ohio, are far in advance of other portions of the same States, in agriculture, manufactures, education, the mechanic arts, and every other interest which makes a State prosperous and happy. A few instances will show these facts. Take the State of Delaware. Here we have a State containing three counties—Newcastle, Kent, and Sussex. Newcastle, on the north, lies contiguous to Pennsylvanians, a free people. This county contains but little more than one fourth of the area of the State; yet, when we come to examine her manufactures and agriculture, and her mechanical products, we find that they surpass those of the whole State besides. In this same county, compared, in an intellectual point of view, with the other two counties, which lie more contiguous to slavery, we find the following results: By the census of 1840, we find in Newcastle county, with a population of 33,120, 529 persons over twenty years of age who can neither read nor write; while Kent, in a population of 19,872, has 1,913; and Sussex, with a population of 25,093, has 2,390 persons of that age in the same deplorable condition.

But, sir, we will not confine ourselves to little Delaware. We will extend our glance further. Take, as another example, the counties of Cecil, Harford, Baltimore, Carroll, Frederick, Washington, and Alleghany, in the State of Maryland, all joining free territory, and compare them with the southern counties of the same State, and see how much they are in advance of their sisters in everything that is desirable—in intelligence, agriculture, wealth, and prosperity.

But, sir, I will go further—ay, even into the "Old Dominion." Take the border counties along the Ohio, and compare them with the counties more remote from the example and influence of free principles. Take, for instance, the district represented by my friend near me, [Mr. HAYMOND.] which consists of the counties in the vicinity of Wheeling, and is supposed to contain a population of some 120,000. There are but few slaves among them, and evidently the people do not feel any interest in the extension of slavery, more than those of the counties of Lancaster and Chester, in Pennsylvania. They have learned its disadvantages. Also take the counties composing the fifteenth district of the same State, represented by the gentleman over the way, [Mr. BEALE,] all of which are contiguous to the Ohio river. They are at this day enjoying a degree of prosperity which is the result of their locality, being more or less influenced by the free institutions of the great State of Ohio. These two districts, it is supposed, contain nearly one fifth of the white population of Virginia. Compare them with the southern counties, in wealth, enterprise, intelligence, and every other thing that should make a people contented, and you will at once come to the conclusion that where even the *example* of Freedom is felt, there will be prosperity and happiness; and, on the contrary, that where the dark spirit of Slavery broods, there will be idleness, poverty, ignorance, and misery.

Mr. Chairman, before I conclude, I shall give another reason why I am opposed to the extension of slavery; and that is, because it has the effect to bring into disrepute, and render dishonorable, manual labor. Although this country is styled the asylum of the oppressed and the home of all, not one out of every hundred of the emigrants who flock to our shores, ventures to make his home in the slave States. They shun the soil of slavery as the upas tree of the desert. The reason is palpable. They know well, that they cannot compete with slave labor. They infer that the slave's master must necessarily grow aristocratic, and come to treat with contempt the poor white man, who is compelled to gain his bread by the sweat of his brow. And they judge truly; for that the institution of slavery is an aristocracy, and one of the worst upon which the light of Heaven ever has shone, is susceptible of the clearest and most satisfactory proof. Consequently, it must be at war with the spirit of our free institutions. In the dominions of the Autocrat of Russia, the Sultan of Turkey, or the Emperor of the German States, the characteristics of government cannot be freely investigated, either by public writings or public discussions. Why is this? Simply, because they are aristocratical Governments. So, precisely, is it with the institutions of slavery. They cannot be trusted to free investigation, either by written or oral discussion. No, sir, no! The man who would undertake such an investigation might be sure to receive at least brutal indignities, and most probably the loss of life itself! Such being the case, it is reasonable and just to conclude that it is one of the most aristocratical institutions in existence, and therefore should be prevented from further extending its insolent power.

Mr. Chairman, I sincerely trust that, whenever a vote on any branch of this question is taken, we shall show to the world, by a decisive voice, that we are not only freemen in name, but freemen in our acts, and that our Declaration of Independence was not a mere matter of form, but a living principle, whose spirit utterly forbids the expansion of the dark and gloomy area of slavery over another acre of American soil, wherever found.

Again, sir: I shall oppose the extension of slavery, because the "peculiar institution" is not satisfied with the African race, which it holds, contrary to justice, in its iron grasp, but it invades the Caucasian ranks, and brings, within the precincts of its domain, the descendants of every clime, and holds, to-day, in abject bondage, many who, from complexion or intellectual appearance, would compare with their masters. No intelligent physiologist would pretend to class them with the descendants of the African race. It is but a few weeks since, that my observation was drawn to this fact, in this city. While sauntering around these public grounds, with a friend, we were met by a large concourse of slaves and their associates, probably more than a thousand in all. I was forcibly struck by the different shades of color among them. Many of them appeared to be entirely white, and a large proportion tinged with Caucasian blood.

Mr. McLANE of Maryland: Will the gentleman from Pennsylvania allow me to ask him a question?

Mr. DICKEY: Certainly, sir.

Mr. McLANE: Are there no mulattoes in Pennsylvania?

Mr. DICKEY: There are mulattoes in Pennsylvania; but they mostly come from Maryland, the State which the gentleman represents in part. [Laughter.]

Mr. Chairman: When I beheld this motley crowd, the question naturally arose in my mind, by what known rule of logic, not to say of justice or consistency, are those persons held in bondage, whose color is as near white as nine hundred and ninety-nine in a thousand? The only response which I can get to such an inquiry from history, and Southern law, is this: If the mother is a slave, the children must be doomed to perpetual bondage. No exceptions are made on account of complexion. Thus we see that, according to the showing of their own rules, the absence of the African color is no bar to slavery, talk as they may of the pretended providential assignment of the African alone to bondage!

But, again, Mr. Chairman, I am opposed to the further extension of slavery, and in favor of the Ordinance of 1787, (or the Wilmot Proviso, as it is more recently called,) because the South, today, is possessed of nearly 350,000 square miles of

territory more than the North. This is an area sufficient, in the estimation of many intelligent men, to keep the slavery-propagandists constantly engaged in extending the institution for three hundred years to come. Though such be the fact, and though the South has, according to the positive declarations of some of her eminent men on this floor, controlled the Government for the last fifty years, yet they have the unblushing impudence to tell us, in the most emphatic terms, that, should we reenact the Ordinance of 1787, which was unanimously passed by our fathers, they will dissolve the Union! Sir, does the perpetuity of this mighty Republic, constituted of thirty sovereign States, hang upon such a tenure as the carrying out the views, and complying with the selfish wishes, of the Southern portion of the Union? Sir, I, for one, do not believe that this Government can be overthrown, for the purpose of extending the institution of slavery; and I believe that when an attempt of this kind is made by any portion of the States, they will find that they have reckoned without their host. They will find that we have a commander in the ship of state, who is not afraid to meet the crisis, and who will prove as true to his country, in the day of trial, as the noble Lawrence did when he fell bleeding on the deck of his vessel, and his last words will be like his—"Don't give up the ship."

